

Chicago State University
Department of Computer Science, Mathematics, & Economics

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Announcement: Minorities and Retirement Security (MRS) Program Grant

From: Aref Aghaei Hervani / Project Director

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Funding Source: The Department of Education (ED) and the Social Security Administration (SSA) have established the Minorities and Retirement Security (MRS) Program to increase and enhance the capacity for research, and research performance and publication, by MSIs in the areas of retirement security, financial literacy and financial decision making within minority and low-income communities. These grants also seek to expand the talent pool of scientists and researchers from minority-serving institutions who are prepared to conduct rigorous research in this area.

Funding Opportunity: the U.S. Department of Education On September 27, 2013, in partnership with the Social Security Administration, announced Chicago State University was awarded \$466,603 to conduct research in the areas of retirement security, financial literacy, and financial decision-making within minority and low-income communities. The purpose of the grant is to provide opportunities for graduate students at institutions with high proportions of minority and low income students to conduct rigorous research in these needed fields; and to address the financial literacy and retirement planning needs within minority and low-income communities.

Job Description: Successful candidates should be able to demonstrate, with samples of past work, having attained a certain level of scientific maturity in their performance, and reading, writing, comprehension, and presentation skills. They should be able to demonstrate, with samples of past work, having attained a certain level of scientific maturity in their performance, and reading, writing, comprehension, and presentation skills. They will be expected to have completed at minimum, past coursework in a calculus based statistics course (MATH 4600), or research design.

Responsibilities:

- Make good faith attempts to be trained in research and publish.
- Demonstrate writing acumen, problem-solving, research design and analysis, and use of technology.
- Demonstrate organizational and interpersonal skills, ethical awareness, and cultural sensitivity.
- Perform other related duties and responsibilities as assigned.

Fellows will be assigned to one of three interdisciplinary research workgroups of 2-3 students per team. Fellows will have access to **all** mentors, but to have more accountability of mentors, each group will be assigned to a single faculty mentor as a principle mentor of the

group. CSU has identified three areas of inquiry as they relate to the Absolute Priority and each group will undertake a single area of focus:

- **Group I** will design a research program to analyze/collect data on the impact, scope and duration of behavioral change among minority groups who have participated in financial literacy interventions.

- **Group II** will design a research program to analyze/collect data that focuses on demographics and wealth disparities among retiring low income and minority groups.

- **Group III** will be trained to analyze the findings from Group I and Group II in order to develop mathematical models on retirement security and financial literacy for low income and minority communities.

- **Course credit:** To ensure timely graduation, Fellows will be permitted to register up to six hours of graduate credit in research or special topics courses in their major.

Selection Criteria: The best candidates will be selected from among the CSU graduate student population using a competitive application and interview process. Successful candidates will be expected to have completed at minimum, past coursework in a calculus based statistics course, or research design. All applicants will be required to sit for a personal interview with the project staff. Applicants will be evaluated on the basis of a combination of the strength and the quality of their academic transcript, his or her attunement with the project's research edict, expressed interest and research experiences, and potential to successfully complete a research-based program. All applicants must be admitted to a CSU graduate program, preferably Mathematics, Criminal Justice, Psychology, GIS, and Social Sciences at the time of application (Note: there is no graduate program in Finance).

Minimum Qualifications: Currently enrolled CSU degree-seeking, graduate student in good standing who will meet the selection criteria determined by the project. Applicants should possess the knowledge and skills to perform ethically and effectively as practitioners, and decision-makers.

Time Commitment: Varies (minimum of 12-15 hours per week for 12 months)

Project Stipend as a trainee: \$6500 (12 months, paid in stipulated installments)

Reports To: Faculty Research Mentors; and Project Director

Positions Supervised: None.